

Good morning. My name is Tom Lutz. I am the financial secretary for Local 1045 Millmen, Lathers, and Resilient Floor Decorators and an executive board member of the Michigan Regional Council of Carpenters and Millwrights. Before becoming financial secretary, I was a floor installer by trade.

The Michigan Regional Council of Carpenters and Millwrights represents over 13,000 skilled workers in Michigan, including millmen, lathers, resilient floor decorators, piledrivers, millwrights, and carpenters.

In just the last year, our members have been working hard refurbishing Eagle Mine and the Humboldt Mill in the Upper Peninsula, creating the world's largest stator at the Ludington Power Plant, building Central Michigan University's Medical School, the only medical school serving residents in central and northern Michigan and building the display shops for the North American International Auto Show at Cobo Hall in Detroit.

Our members are able to lead and complete such diverse projects because the Michigan Regional Council of Carpenters and Millwrights provides extensive training in state-of-the-art techniques, education, and equipment. Our apprenticeship school is a paid, four-year program consisting of practical, on-the-job training and state-of-the-art classroom experiences, funded entirely by the Michigan Regional Council of Carpenters and Millwrights and their contractor partners. We have apprenticeship schools in Fennville, Mason, Saginaw, Marquette, Grayling, Ferndale, and Warren. We graduate hundreds of journey level carpenters and millwrights every year, certified by the U.S. Department of Labor.

To keep pace with the changing workforce, the Michigan Regional Council of Carpenters and Millwrights is actively recruiting women, African American, and Latino workers. We are proactively reaching out to residents in the city of Detroit through a highly successful pre-apprenticeship program called Access for All. Access for All connects hardworking Detroit residents with training in the skilled trades to create full-time career opportunities through a collaborative partnership between the community, labor unions, and employers. Graduates of this 9 week program become apprentices in the skilled trades, working all over the state.

And we are collaborating with veterans through a program called Helmets to Hardhats. Helmets to Hardhats helps military service members successfully transition back into civilian life by connecting them to quality careers in the construction industry. It is also a way for our industry to benefit from the hardworking leaders in our armed forces.

By partnering with high schools, community colleges, and employers, the Michigan Regional Council of Carpenters and Millwrights is giving people the skills and tools to be successful by creating a pathway from high school to career that is fully funded and debt-free.

The men and women in the skilled trades are people who don't ever want to be a drag on the system. We are builders. We are problem-solvers. Many of us have pulled ourselves up by our workboots and built a great life for ourselves. And then we pass on that knowledge and those life skills to our apprentices through our fully funded apprenticeship schools.